



United States Department of the Interior  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Fire Management Branch  
National Interagency Fire Center  
3833 South Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705



Refer to: FMB190014

March 4, 2019

Memorandum

To: Regional Fire Management Coordinators, Regions 1-8  
From: Chief, Branch of Fire Management   
Subject: Updated: Fiscal Year 2019 Service Direction for DOI Medical Standards Program

This memorandum provides U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Branch of Fire Management, guidance for calendar year 2019 on the implementation of the Department of the Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program (DOI MSP) and supersedes Branch of Fire Management memorandum FMB190010 dated February 5, 2019. The DOI MSP guidance memo for 2019 can be found on the MSP website at: [https://www.nifc.gov/medical\\_standards/Contact-Us/index.html](https://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/Contact-Us/index.html).

**Medical Clearance for Arduous Fitness Rating**

For 2019, all regions will continue using the CHS baseline exam for new employees (regardless of hiring authority) and collateral duty employees who are carrying arduous duty qualifications if they did not previously receive a baseline exam.

Permanent and temporary employees who are new militia/collateral duty firefighters must undergo an exam. While the exam is not a condition of employment for these responders, it is a condition of performing arduous duty wildland fire work.

Current DOI policy requires arduous duty firefighters complete an exam every three years with self-certification annually between exams. All arduous fitness-rated Service personnel who completed a baseline exam as part of the 2016 implementation group will need to take a periodic exam in 2019 within 45 days prior to taking the work capacity test (WCT). This exam will need to be requested through the CHS Client Assess System (CAS) by a supervisor or servicing human resource officer who has been granted access to CAS. This process is the same as requesting an initial baseline exam for new employees except the type of exam requested will be periodic instead of baseline.

**Medical Clearance and the Work Capacity Test**

All arduous personnel who completed an exam in 2017 or 2018 through CHS and received a Medically Qualified determination; or a Qualified with Risk Mitigation Waiver (RM/W) from their agency, must complete the DOI MSP self-certification process within 45 days prior to taking the WCT in 2019. Self-certification may be requested by the employee in the CHS Employee Access System (EAS). Results of completed self-certifications will be printable through EAS and should be used as verification of medical qualification at the WCT. Self-certification results will also be viewable by management in CAS. If a self-certification needs to be updated to meet the 45 day requirement, the employee may go into EAS and request another self-certification exam.

### **Medical Clearance for Light and Moderate Fitness Rating**

Beginning in January 2019, the medical screening process for light and moderate fitness testing will be centralized and automated through our national contractor CHS. Fire Management Officers (or delegate) may request Health Screening Questionnaires (HSQ) for light and moderate fitness participants through the CAS. Participants will be sent log-in information to access and complete the HSQ via the CHS EAS on-line. If significant health issues are identified on the HSQ, the examinee will be provided additional instructions on how to obtain supporting information needed for medical clearance. The OF178 exam will no longer be used. The employee may need to visit his/her personal physician to obtain the recommended additional medical information and is responsible for any related costs. Once cleared on the HSQ, the employee will receive a certificate of clearance to participate in the WCT.

### **Medical Qualification Expiration Date and Periodicity**

Three-year periodicity is based on the date of the actual exam. Annual self-certifications between periodic exams must be completed within 12-months of the previous medical qualification date and within 45 days prior to taking a WCT. If an employee's medical qualification expires prior to successfully clearing a periodic exam or self-certification they are no longer medically qualified. If an employee is on an emergency assignment on the date their WCT/refresher and/or medical qualification expires, they will complete their assignment including any extensions. Upon return to their duty station, they must complete the WCT/refresher and/or DOI MSP self-certification process and acquire a new Incident Qualification Card prior to accepting any new assignment.

### **Payment for Exams**

Exams performed under the CHS contract will be paid by a national level billing process. The employee is responsible for any cost related to obtaining additional medical testing or information needed to determine the employee's medical status. In rare cases, and when the Service specifically requests the additional exam(s) or information, the local unit will cover the additional cost.

Questions regarding this program should be directed to the DOI Wildland Firefighter MSP at 1-888-286-2521 or [wlfcsr@blm.gov](mailto:wlfcsr@blm.gov), your Regional Wildland Firefighter MSP Lead, or the Service's National Fire Safety Specialist, Ted Mason at 208-387-5831 or [Theodore\\_mason@fws.gov](mailto:Theodore_mason@fws.gov).

cc:

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